

District III Advisory Board Minutes
July 2, 2008
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The District III Advisory Board meeting was held at 7 p.m. at the Wichita Water Center at 101 E Pawnee. Eleven District Advisory Board members were in attendance; 13 City staff and 13 members of the public were present.

Members Present

Judy Dillard
Charlotte Foster
Jim Gulick
Joann Hartig
Paula Hearn
John Kemp
DeWayne Kitchen
Georgia Lambke
Billie Tucker
Bill Ward
Council Member Jim Skelton

Members Absent

Teresa Cook

Staff Present

Lt. Clark Wiemeyer, Patrol East
Capt. Hassan Ramzah, Patrol East
Batt. Chief Rich Harris, WFD
Batt. Chief Ernie Schuler, WFD
Joe Pajor, Public Works
Sgt. Bret Stuff, Patrol South
Off. Maurice Floyd, Patrol South
Off. Dave Hinnners, Patrol East
Off. Ann Mackey, Patrol East
Sharon Dickgrafe, Law Dept.
Dave Warren, Wichita Water Utilities
Angela Cato, Wichita Water Utilities
Janet Johnson, Neighborhood Services

Guests

Listed on the last page

ORDER OF BUSINESS

At 7:02 p.m. **Pro Tem Bill Ward** called the meeting to order. **Council Member Jim Skelton** arrived and asked for approval of the minutes. The meeting minutes from June 4, 2008, were approved, however **Charlotte Foster** wanted it noted that during the previous meeting's discussion on sales tax she asked what would prevent the City Council from raising the mil levy 10 years later and everyone laughed. **Council Member Skelton** said there would be nothing in place to prevent that. **Foster** also said it was her understanding that the non-conforming billboard on Kellogg, which the DAB voted against in May, is not a done deal and it may be going before the BZA.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Scheduled items

Sharon Dickgrafe, Assistant City Attorney, reported that she is running for District Court Judge in the Eighteenth District, Division 10. Her current duties involve advising the OCI and Animal Control Departments and she is highly involved with neighborhood issues. She has also been a part of the START effort in District 1. **Dickgrafe** encouraged neighborhood leaders to utilize START concepts in their own neighborhoods, especially neighborhood buy-in. She said citizens can do an assessment and talk to their neighbors about concerns. She also noted that self-policing can be a good thing, as long as it's not carried too far. **Dickgrafe** said City staff from the Departments of OCI and Housing are willing to come to Neighborhood Association meetings and provide information and answer questions.

Charlotte Foster asked if Dickgrafe would come out and do a neighborhood assessment. **Dickgrafe** said no, she wasn't in a position to do physical assessments, but she would be happy to work with neighborhoods on developing assessment tools.

Bill Ward said when you complain to the Community Policing Officer they usually get right on it. He asked if the citizens should be more involved. **Dickgrafe** said it depends on what the violation is and if it's a violation that can be prosecuted. She said it's always appropriate for citizens to follow up with police and OCI on complaints.

Joann Hartig asked if Dickgrafe addresses code violations on commercial properties. **Dickgrafe** said she does work with OCI on those issues such as illegal salvaging. **Paul Davis, 6417 S. Madison**, said in his experience Dickgrafe had been helpful with these types of issues.

Charlotte Foster asked how Dickgrafe is involved with Environmental Court and Judge Ratner. **Dickgrafe** said she doesn't do prosecution; she works in an advising capacity.

Lonny Wright, 1721 S. Lulu, said there are almost 30 judgeships and only one female judge, which he sees as a serious imbalance. He said we need to take a serious look and support Sharon Dickgrafe for District Court Judge.

Stefani Brand, Marriage is for Keeps, said the Catholic Charities program is currently looking for couples to participate. The program is directed toward low to moderate-income families. They are looking for couples who are least 18-years-old and have a child 15 years or younger at homes. Participants meet once a week for 13 weeks and for their participation they receive a \$10 gas card each week, a \$30 Wal-Mart gift card each week and a catered meal at the meeting. Couples who complete the application process will receive a \$50 gift card. For more information, or to participate, call 264-8344 ext. 322.

Ellie Shore, Spay and Neuter, was not present.

Recommended action: Receive and file.

Non-Scheduled items

Elena Ingle, 3608 Meadow Lane, is a District III advisor for the Mayor's Youth Council and she introduced two of the District III youth who are serving on the Council: **Mina Truong** and **Minhchau Truong**. **Council Member Skelton** congratulated the youth and thanked Elena for stepping up as a volunteer.

Recommended action: Receive and file.

STAFF REPORTS

Community Police Report

Capt. Hassan Ramzah, Patrol East, introduced himself as the new Commander at the Patrol East Bureau. He said he is anxious to develop working relationships and believes that partnerships with

the community are very important. **Capt. Ramzah** said he sees crime prevention as being very important and he will be implementing some new crime prevention initiatives in the Patrol East area. He also reported that the homicide that occurred in Planeview today was a situation where a 23-year-old woman was shot by a known acquaintance and was not a random act of violence.

Officer Ann Mackey, 32 Beat Patrol East, reported that residential burglaries are up in her area and residential burglaries are holding steady. She said her beat team is working on their gang suppression plan for this month. **Mackey** said that Officer Steve Jerrell, who has been on the 33 Beat for several years, is moving to Patrol North and Officer Maria Anderson will be the new Community Policing Officer on 33 Beat. She also reported there are around 115 kids attending the Planeview Activity Camp for Kids. **Mackey** reported that Officer Justin Whyte on the 34 Beat currently has around 30 kids enrolled in the Hilltop Friendship Camp. And in the 36 Beat, **Mackey** said Officer Dan Oblinger reported six residential and two non residential burglaries for the month of June.

Joann Hartig asked if it was appropriate to contact police if you are going on vacation. **Mackey** said yes, and the police will do extra patrols by your house. She said you should also let your neighbors know so they can also watch your house for you.

Billie Tucker said he has been working with Officer Whyte at the Friendship Camp for the past five weeks and he said Officer Whyte has gone above and beyond in providing this much needed activity for the kids in Hilltop.

Officer Mo Floyd, 27 Beat Patrol South, reported that Patrol South Community Policing is under the new leadership of Lt. Donnie Phelps and Sgt. Bret Stull. He also reported that Officer Sara Voyles who was on 29 Beat has gone back to patrol and Officer David Nienstedt has taken her place. **Officer Floyd** said last Saturday they hosted a kids day at Watson Park, but the turnout was low due to the heavy rain that day. He said it is a great event and in spite of the rain, those who attended had a good time. Since school has been out a lot of graffiti has been showing up in his beat. He said he has found two swastikas in his area and this is very disturbing. The biggest problem right now on 27 Beat is Big Chubs bar. He said while the bar is located in District 4, problems from it are bleeding over into District 3. **Officer Floyd** said the bar is only open on Friday and Saturday nights, and the 3rd and 4th Watch Officers are working diligently to address the problems.

Wichita Fire Department Report

Battalion Chiefs Rich Harris and Ernie Schuler gave the fire report. **BC Schuler** said that Fire Chief Ron Blackwell has been promoting Community Risk Reduction and as a result, Fire Department personnel are going to be more visible in neighborhoods, especially in area where there have been recent fires. He said whenever there is a significant fire, within the next few days, fire personnel will go door to door and talk with resident about their concerns and provide fire prevention tips, etc. **Schuler** said the biggest concern currently is the upcoming Fourth of July holiday. He said they will be conducting fire patrols for illegal fire works, but due to the sheer numbers that can get pretty overwhelming.

Schuler also made note of the recent ground breaking for Fire Station 22. **Council Member Skelton** wanted to know why it takes a year to build a fire station. **Schuler** said he didn't know, but sometimes the contractors do finish ahead of schedule.

Council Member Skelton also wanted to know if the Community Risk Reduction program has proven results in any other cities. **Schuler** said he personally didn't know, but he felt confident Chief Blackwell had experienced success with it in other communities.

Charlotte Foster asked for confirmation that the hours of 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. are quiet time. **Schuler** said yes, those are the hours when the noise ordinance can be enforced.

Larry Manny, 1116 Alturas, asked when the trailer park at Denker and Hydraulic was going to be required to remove a deteriorated home and put up a screening fence. **Council Member Skelton** said he wasn't sure.

Georgia Lambke asked when the lot was going to be mowed because she has been receiving a lot of complaints about it. **Council Member Skelton** asked Janet Johnson to look into it.

Action: Receive and file.

NEW BUSINESS

David Warren, Wichita Water Utilities Director, gave a PowerPoint presentation on Water Utilities 2008-09 rate recommendations. From time to time, the City Council must consider water and sewer rate adjustments to address the ongoing operating and capital costs associated with the operating the City's water and sewer utilities. Wichita's Water Utilities continues to make investments in our water/sewer system infrastructure in order to expand the treatment, distribution and collection systems and keep pace with growth in the metropolitan area.

Additionally, the City Council approved a Water Supply Plan in 1993 to assure that Wichita would have the water it needs through the year 2050. The largest component of this plan is the Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) project. Staff estimates that the current Phase II projects will cost more than \$230 million making this the single largest capital undertaking in the department's history.

Rate adjustments are necessary to fund these critical capital improvement projects and to keep our debt-service coverage ratio above 1.2, a requirement of Water Utilities' bond covenants.

The past five years, rate increases have been made in small increments but have not had a significant impact on revenue. At the same time, capital spending has been increasing. As a result, Water Utilities' debt-service coverage ratio has fallen from 1.98 to 1.2, the lowest percentage allowed by bond covenants. The extremely wet weather this year and last year has only served to further reduce water sales revenues.

Water Utilities generates half of its annual revenue in the peak water-use season (summer months) due to irrigation. Large amounts of rainfall in 2007 led to a revenue shortfall of \$3.5 million. Significant amounts of rain this year may lead to an even greater shortfall.

In order to provide the revenue necessary to maintain existing infrastructure, finance necessary capital improvements and provide an adequate debt-service coverage ratio, Water Utilities is proposing revenue stabilization and rate adjustments. Under the proposal, on Aug. 1, 2008, \$1 would be added to the base charge for each account. In addition, beginning on Jan. 1, 2009, the current water rate structure would be modified so that the water volume charges in Block 1 and Block 2 are increased by \$0.29 and \$1.28, respectively.

Water Utilities is projecting eight (8) percent increases in both water and sewer per year through 2010.

(DeWayne Kitchen left the meeting)

Warren pointed out that when decisions were made about Wichita's water system five decades ago, there were only 87,000 people living in Wichita. He said that Wichita is at a crossroads concerning water and that we need to make sure that Wichita not only survives, but thrives.

Bill Ward asked how the equus beds would be impacted by the proposed power plants in Western Kansas. **Warren** said that shouldn't really affect Wichita. **Warren** said the Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project (ASR) will put Wichita in a position to keep and attract new industries.

Jim Gulick asked what would happen if Wichita quit providing water to the peripheral cities. **Warren** posed the rhetorical question "What is Wichita?" He said in his opinion Wichita doesn't end at the City limits. He pointed out that as a Wichita resident and owner of Wichita Water Utilities, you are benefitting by selling water to other communities because they are helping offset the cost.

Charlotte Foster confirmed with Warren that Wichita is on a tiered billing system, and then asked where Colwich gets its water for the ethanol plant. **Warren** said they get that water from wells; that Wichita doesn't sell them any water for that.

Judy Dillard asked how come other cities that will benefit from the ASR project aren't being asked to help fund it. **Warren** said that Wichita stands to gain the most from the project and pointed in that communities are only allowed to withdraw as much water as they put in the equus beds. He also said that there is Federal and State money being invested in the project.

Joann Hartig asked if all the recent rain wasn't helping restore the equus bed. **Warren** said it helps, but at a very slow rate and more is taken out than is replenished. **Hartig** said you don't realize how important water is until you don't have it, as she recently experienced.

Paul Davis, 6417 S. Madison, asked how much treated water the sewer system dumps back into the river. **Warren** said they discharge about 40,000 gallons a day and the ASR will only take in water when the river is up after a heavy rain.

Council Member Skelton said he is inclined to support the rate increase.

Larry Manny, 1116 Alturas, said if we don't have water, you won't care how much gas is.

Recommended action: Provide comment

Chapin Landfill Methane Gas Migration Issue

Joe Pajor, Public Works, presented information on the gas migration at Chapin. **Pajor** said last Thursday Kansas Gas Service was conducting routing checks and found gas in the soil in the northwest corner of the Lamplighter Mobile Home park near MacArthur and Hydraulic. It appears that the ground water has been rising due to the recent large amounts of rain and has caused methane gas from the landfill to migrate. As a precaution, five mobile homes were evacuated. **Pajor** said all of the detected gas was in the soil and as of today, the families were all able to move back into their homes. He explained that the City cut trenches on the north and west sides of the mobile home park and put in wells to draw the gas out of the soil. He said they are in the process of looking for permanent solutions so this doesn't happen again.

Judy Dillard asked if gas was detected anywhere else in the area. **Pajor** said there is an ongoing investigation to see if gas is located in any other areas; he explained that clay soil creates isolated pockets, where sandy soil allows the gas to move. He said they believe that most of the gas has vented and there are no commercial amounts of gas.

Bill Ward asked if the detection of methane gas would slow down the process of building a park on the Chapin site. **Pajor** said no, but if this had happened during the actual construction, then it probably would have been blamed on the construction and that would have slowed things down.

Jim Gulick wanted to know what Pajor meant about there not being commercial amounts of gas present. **Pajor** said for example the old Brooks landfill generates enough methane gas that it is sold to the Colwich ethanol plant. The old Chapin site doesn't generate anything close to that. Gulick and Pajor then reviewed all of the former landfill sites in Wichita.

Georgia Lambke wanted to know if the release of the methane from the soil at Chapin is contaminating the air. **Pajor** said no, that the air already has a certain amount of methane gas in it and the amount being released at Chapin is not dangerous. He explained that if it was, they would use a flare system which would insure everyone's safety.

Recommended action: Receive and file

BOARD AGENDA

Updates, Issues and Reports

Charlotte Foster shared a column from the Eagle about Joyland. She thought the City had been sued; **Council Member Skelton** said that has not happened. **Foster** asked if the new retail site on Kellogg is in District 3. **Council Member Skelton** said yes. **Foster** said she attended a presentation on AmTrak and wanted to know if the City could purchase the Cox building for a station. **Council Member Skelton** said he supports the AmTrak proposal, but sees it more as a KDOT or railroad project; he does not know the status of the old Cox building. **Foster** said she was at a meeting with County Commissioner Gwen Welshimer and she said the County "expects" cities in the county to franchise trash service, but can't make them. **Council Member Skelton** said there would be another workshop on franchising in the near future. He also still wants more information on the possibilities of a regional recycling center.

Council Member Skelton announced that he has asked City staff to review the noise ordinance.

Judy Dillard reported that she heard the Home Depot is definitely not going in at 47th and Broadway, but they are going to put something else in there. She also said the old brick from the Funston School is being recycled.

Action: Receive and file.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned.

The next regularly scheduled meeting for District Advisory Board III will be held at 7 p.m., August 6, 2008, at the Water Center at 101 E. Pawnee.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Johnson, Neighborhood Assistant – District III

Guests

Larry Manny	1116 Alturas
Kathy Manny	1116 Alturas
Bill Barnes	2707 S. Hillside
Goldie Barnes	2707 S. Hillside
Elena Ingle	3608 Meadow Lane
Paul Davis	6419 S. Madison
Claudia Lee	2826 Greenwood
Donna Thorton	2714 Southfork
Carole Campbell	2821 S. Mosley
Mina Truong	1717 S. Washington
Minhchau Truong	1717 S. Washington
Lonny Wright	1721 S. Lulu
Dustin Richey	2502 S. Pattie